

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9128

INFO AMEMBASSY LAGOS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, PDEV, TECH, VE

SUBJECT: CONTROL DATA CORPORATION ACTIVITIES IN VENEZUELA

1. SUMMARY. ON JUNE 10 MR. ROBERT D. SCHMIDT, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, CONTROL DATA CORPORATION OF MINNEAPOLIS, CALLED ON AMBASSADOR SHLAUDEMANN TO EXPLAIN HIS FIRM'S SALES PROGRAM IN VENEZUELA. ESSENTIALLY, THE PROGRAM BEING OFFERED VENEZUELA IS A GLOBAL COMPUTER SYSTEM WHICH WOULD PROVIDE FOR SYSTEMS SERVICES, COMPUTERS ASSISTED EDUCATION SERVICES ALONG THE LINES OF THE PLATO IV SYSTEM DEVELOPED WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS, AND A MAIN COMPUTER SYSTEM AND NETWORK FOR INDUSTRY. END SUMMARY.

2. IN HIS CALL ON AMBASSADOR SHLAUDEMANN, MR. SCHMIDT EXPLAINED THAT HIS FIRM HAS BEEN INVESTIGATING THE VENEZUELAN MARKET OVER THE PAST TWO MONTHS, THAT THEY HAVE FOUND CONSIDERABLE INTEREST FOR THEIR PROGRAM IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION; IN CANTV, THE TELEPHONE COMPANY; AND IN VARIOUS OTHER VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT ENTITIES. CONTROL DATA'S PRIMARY CONCERN IS IN SELLING AN INTEGRATED GLOBAL COMPUTER SYSTEM. THEY SAID THEY ARE NOT INTERESTED IN SELLING THE BITS AND PIECES. THE PROGRAM WHICH THEY ENVISAGE FOR VENEZUELA

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INCLUDES NOT ONLY INSTALLATIONS OF LARGE COMPUTERS AND A

NATION-WIDE NETWORK OF TERMINALS BUT ALSO ACCESS TO COMPUTERS IN OTHER COUNTRIES THROUGH SATELLITE COMMUNICATIONS.

3. DURING AN EARLIER VISIT TO CARACAS, CONTROL DATA PERSONNEL REACHED A TENTATIVE AGREEMENT WITH THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION WHICH CALLED FOR SENDING FOUR OFFICERS FROM THE MINISTRY TO MINNEAPOLIS FOR AN EXAMINATION OF CONTROL DATA'S SYSTEMS THERE.

4. FOLLOWING HIS CALL ON AMBASSADOR SHLAUDEMANN, MR. SCHMIDT AND OTHER CONTROL DATA EXECUTIVES MET WITH THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION, VARIOUS OFFICERS IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES AND HYDROCARBONS, AN OFFICIAL OF CANTV, AND AN OFFICIAL OF CONVINCA, THE GOVERNMENT SHIP BUILDING ENTITY.

5. FOLLOWING CONTROL DATA'S VISIT WITH THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION, STUDENT LEADERS OF THE CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF CARACAS FEDERATION OF STUDENTS ATTACKED THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION FOR "SIGNING CONTRACTS WITH CONTROL DATA CORP. TO PROVIDE US-TRAINED EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS TO VENEZUELA." THE MINISTER REPLIED TO THESE CHARGES VIA A FILM CLIP INCLUDED IN THE GOVERNMENT'S CHANNEL 8 NEWSCAST ON THE EVENING OF JUNE 11. THE MINISTER STATED THAT HE HAD SIGNED NO CONTRACT WITH CONTROL DATA CORP. AND THAT VENEZUELAN EDUCATION, CURRENT AND FUTURE, WOULD BE BASED ON POLICIES DEVELOPED IN VENEZUELA BY VENEZUELAN.

6. COMMENT. WHILE CONTROL DATA CORP. REPORTS THAT IT HAS HAD CONSIDERABLE SUCCESS IN SELLING ITS PROGRAM OR ELEMENTS OF IT IN IRAN, NIGERIA AND THE SOVIET UNION, CONTROL DATA REALIZES THAT IT MAY BE MORE DIFFICULT TO WIN ACCEPTANCE FOR SUCH A PROGRAM IN VENEZUELA, DESPITE THE MANY ADVANTAGES WHICH COULD ACCRUE FROM VENEZUELA'S ADOPTION OF A NATIONAL INTEGRATED COMPUTER SYSTEM. SHLAUDEMANN

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